

2139 Silas Deane Highway  
Suite 205  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067  
(860) 257-8066

Raymie H. Wayne, Ph.D., JD, MSW, President  
Stephen A Karp, MSW, Executive Director  
[naswct@naswct.net](mailto:naswct@naswct.net)

Testimony on SB 471: AAC Mental and Behavioral Health Services  
Public Health Committee  
March 19, 2014

Submitted By: Stephen Karp, MSW

The National Association of Social Workers, CT Chapter representing over 3000 members asks the Public Health Committee to delete **Section 2 ( C )** of SB 471.

Section 2 ( C ) of the bill has the effect of reversing legislation passed by the 2013 Legislature to assure that individuals seeking to attain a LADC have a degree in a counseling related field. Section 2 ( C ) creates a grandfathering provision of “another subject approved by the commissioner, provided the semester hours in a subject other than counseling or a counseling-related subject were completed or in progress on or before July 1, 2013”. Our problem with this section is two-fold: it allows someone to qualify for the LADC with a non-counseling degree and unlike most grandfathering clauses, it has no expiration date.

Having a license to practice, which allows for independent practice as well as agency based practice, should require the licensee to have significant education, training, and experience in a field that is directly related to the license. Last year the Legislature passed legislation that defines the qualifying master degrees for the LADC to be; social work, marriage and family therapy, counseling, psychology or a related field. This bill allows an individual without a master degree in any of the aforementioned fields to become licensed as a LADC. This dramatically weakens the standards for the LADC and is not in the best of interest of consumers who have the right to expect that a LADC holds a master level counseling related degree. Furthermore, it allows for a person without a counseling related degree that took courses any time prior to July 1, 2012 (it could be courses taken years ago) to apply those hours toward LADC eligibility.

Another concern with this new language is that the DPH Commissioner or designated representative is to determine who qualifies for grandfathering. The Department of Public Health (DPH) does not have staffing qualified to make such a decision. By deleting Section 2 ( C ) of SB 471 it will remove the need for DPH to make decisions on applicants educational coursework.

Over the past decade the field of drug and alcohol counseling has come a long way in terms of professionalization. The proposed language in Section 2 is a step backwards for the drug and alcohol counselor's profession and a negative for consumers being treated by LADCs. We join with the Connecticut Association of Addiction Professionals (CAAP) in calling for deletion of Section 2 ( C ) of SB 471.